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THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 24 December 1996 from the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Iranian-Russian statement on Afghanistan adopted at the talks in Tehran on 22 and 23 December 1996 between the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, A. A. Velayati, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Y. M. Primakov (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 39, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) M. TAKHT-RAVANCHI
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of the Islamic
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(Signed) Sergey LAVROV
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ANNEX

[Original: Russian]

Statement on Afghanistan adopted at the talks held at Tehran on 22 and 23 December 1996 between the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

In the course of talks held at Tehran on 22 and 23 December 1996, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation, A. A. Velayati and Y. M. Primakov, exchanged views on the development of events in Afghanistan and the prospects for a peaceful settlement of the inter-Afghan conflict.

Concern was expressed over the continuing violent armed confrontation between the forces of the Government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and anti-government units.

The fact that as a result of the military action the civilian population is suffering and the number of refugees is on the rise gives cause for concern. The instances of serious violation of human rights, persecution on political and ethnic grounds and violation of the norms of international law, including actions that prevent the normal conduct of United Nations activities in Afghanistan, merit condemnation.

The intensification of the internal conflict may endanger the maintenance of the State unity of Afghanistan and impair peace and stability in the region.

The Ministers called for the parties to the conflict in Afghanistan to cease military action immediately and begin the search for ways of reaching agreements with a view to the restoration of civil peace. In so doing, account should be taken of the legitimate interests of all ethnic and religious groups and regions. None of the Afghan military and political groupings should impose its dominance on the others.

After calling for a halt to outside interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, the Ministers emphasized that a necessary condition for the settlement of the conflict must be maintenance of the State independence and territorial integrity of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

The need for implementation of the provisions of Security Council resolution 1076 (1996) of 22 December 1996 was emphasized. The positive significance of the meetings held at the regional level, particularly the meeting of the leaders of five member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States at Almaty on 4 October 1996 and the regional conference to promote a settlement in Afghanistan held in Tehran on 29 and 30 October 1996, as well as of the meeting of representatives of the interested States on Afghanistan organized by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in New York on 18 November 1996, was noted.

Agreement was reached on a continuation of the exchange of views between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation on issues relating to the settlement of the inter-Afghan conflict. The readiness of both countries to cooperate actively with the United Nations, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and interested States with a view to drawing up and adopting urgent measures to halt hostile action in Afghanistan and bring about a political settlement of the Afghan conflict was confirmed.